

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for use in providing a Web team portal in a collaborative system
2 comprising the steps of:

3 setting up a plurality of team members to collaboratively communicate;
4 automatically collecting presence information of each of said members in said
5 team;

6 automatically determining a current location for each team member; and
7 dynamically displaying a visual representation having a plurality of display
8 windows including at least said team members, said collected presence and location
9 information, and a set of mechanisms for a team member to use in conjunction with said
10 displayed presence and location information to initiate a prescribed mode of
11 communicating with one or more others of said members in said team for a particular
12 collaborative purpose.

1 2. The method as defined in claim 1 further including a step of a member of said
2 team employing said displayed presence and location information and at least one of said
3 mechanisms to initiate communication with one or more of others of said members in
4 said team.

1 3. The method as defined in claim 1 wherein said prescribed mode of
2 communicating includes at least either an asynchronous mode or a synchronous mode.

1 4. The method as defined in claim 3 wherein said step of dynamically displaying
2 includes a step of automatically updating one or more of said plurality of display
3 windows.

1 5. The method as defined in claim 4 wherein said steps of automatically
2 collecting presence and location information include steps of automatically updating said
3 presence and location information, respectively.

1 6. The method as defined in claim 5 wherein said presence information for a team
2 member represents prescribed activities of said team member regarding one or more of
3 predetermined instrumentalities and/or actions.

1 7. The method as defined in claim 6 wherein said set of mechanisms includes at
2 least email, chat, voice call, or the like.

1 8. The method as defined in claim 6 further including a step of maintaining said
2 collected and updated presence and location information and a step of notifying said
3 participants of changes of status in said presence and location information for said
4 members in said team.

1 9. The method as defined in claim 8 wherein said set of mechanisms further
2 includes persistent chat and said step of initiating communication further includes
3 initiating a persistent chat session.

1 10. Apparatus for use in providing a Web team portal in a collaborative system
2 comprising:

3 means for setting up a plurality of team members to collaboratively communicate;

4 means for automatically collecting presence information of each of said members
5 in said team;

6 means for automatically determining a current location for each team member;

7 and

8 means for dynamically displaying a visual representation having a plurality of
9 display windows including at least said team members, said collected presence and
10 location information, and a set of mechanisms for a team member to use in conjunction
11 with said displayed presence and location information to initiate a prescribed mode of
12 communicating with one or more others of said members in said team for a particular
13 collaborative purpose.

1 11. The invention as defined in claim 10 further including a means for allowing a
2 member of said team to employ said displayed presence and location information and at
3 least one of said mechanisms to initiate communication with one or more of others of
4 said members in said team.

1 12. The invention as defined in claim 10 wherein said prescribed mode of
2 communicating includes at least either an asynchronous mode or a synchronous mode.

1 13. The invention as defined in claim 12 wherein said means for dynamically
2 displaying includes means for automatically updating one or more of said plurality of
3 display windows.

1 14. The invention as defined in claim 13 wherein said means for automatically
2 determining location information includes means for automatically updating said location
3 information.

1 15. The invention as defined in claim 14 wherein said means for automatically
2 collecting presence information includes means for automatically updating said presence
3 information.

1 16. The invention as defined in claim 15 wherein said presence information for a
2 participant represents prescribed activities of said participant regarding one or more of
3 predetermined instrumentalities and/or actions.

1 17. The invention as defined in claim 16 wherein said set of mechanisms includes
2 at least email, chat, voice call, or the like.

1 18. Apparatus for use in providing a Web team portal in a collaborative system
2 comprising:

3 a call set up unit to set up a plurality of members in a team to collaboratively
4 communicate;

5 a user agent unit to automatically collect presence and location information of
6 each of said members in said team; and

7 a visual display unit to dynamically display a visual representation having a
8 plurality of display windows including at least said team members, said collected
9 presence and location information, and a set of mechanisms for a team member to use
10 in conjunction with said displayed presence and location information to initiate a
11 prescribed mode of communicating with one or more others of said members in said team
12 for a particular collaborative purpose.

1 19. The invention as defined in claim 18 further including a device to allow a
2 member of said team to employ said displayed presence and location information and at
3 least one of said mechanisms to initiate communication with one or more of others of
4 said members in said team.

1 20. The invention as defined in claim 18 wherein said prescribed mode of
2 communicating includes at least either an asynchronous mode or a synchronous mode.

1 21. The invention as defined in claim 20 wherein said visual display unit
2 automatically updates one or more of said plurality of display windows.

1 22. The invention as defined in claim 21 wherein said user agent unit
2 automatically updates said presence and location information.

1 23. The invention as defined in claim 22 wherein said presence information for a
2 participant represents prescribed activities of said participant regarding one or more of
3 predetermined instrumentalities and/or actions.

1 24. The invention as defined in claim 23 wherein said set of mechanisms includes
2 at least email, chat, voice call, or the like.

1 25. The invention as defined in claim 22 wherein said user agent unit further
2 maintains said collected and updated presence and location information and notifies said
3 participants of changes of status in said presence information for said participants in said
4 group.

1 26. The invention as defined in claim 25 wherein said set of mechanisms further
2 includes persistent chat and said step of initiating communication further includes
3 initiating a persistent chat session.

1 27. The invention as defined in claim 26 wherein said set up unit communication
2 further sets up third party calls.